"METROPOLIS" MAGAZINE

Depicting Scenes, Story and Incidents in the Making of the World's Greatest Modern Spectacular Film Masterpiece. . .

A Scene in "The Wonder City of the Future."

SOME FACTS ABOUT "METROPOLIS."

The idea of describing a city of about one hundred years hence, with all its modern achievements, was of course a very tempting and interesting one, for everyone likes to have a glimpse into the future, and nearly everybody has some idea of the technical developments of some kind, according to his imagination. Therefore, the skilled scenario writer had to provide for two important things, as necessary for the film as for the novel—sensation and love.

In **"METROPOLIS"** the sensation that will grip everyone is the making of the artificial human being—the "robot"—which as the soulless creation of imperfect man, lacks the divine feeling of love, and is therefore, condemned to wrong. Opposed to this there is the most ideal creation—a young girl of the people, for whose sweet and tender love the son of the Master of "Metropolis" is ready and willing to give his all. The whole of "Metropolis" may be compared with a modern Tower of Babel, where the different elements are fighting under different conditions for their existence, or their indulgence in pleasure. So you find contrasts of all kinds; running the gamut of all the emotions and pleasures, until at last you get a splendid solution in the problem of this modern, strenuous, wealth-seeking time——"THE MEDIATOR BETWEEN BRAIN AND MUSCLE MUST BE THE HEART." Much has been written in a fantastic way by prominent writers the world over upon this same theme. Not all these writers have succeeded in dealing adequately with the eternal question of Love in the midst of the imaginative foreshadowings of the ultra-scientific and mechanical world of the future. In these works, it is not unusual for the elements of imagined futurity to overshadow that of Love. The perfect blend of these two elements is rare, and in "Metropolis" we see that Love as it has been in the past, will in the world of the future, still be the simple power that it is to-day.

In "Metropolis" our sympathy is compelled alike towards the rich Eric and the poor and lowly Mary.

The word "Metropolis" is in itself symbolical of greatness, and it only remains to say that the production reaches such a dazzling standard that it will remain unsurpassed in the next few years. Therefore, we will not trouble our readers with the usual range of superlatives, but remain satisfied by asking them to go, see, and be convinced.

"METROPOLIS."

THE CAST

JOHN MASTERMAN ... ... ALFRED ABEL

ERIC, his son ... ... GUSTAV FROLICH

ROTWANG, an inventor ... RUDOLF KLEIN-ROGGE

SLIM ... ... FRITZ RASP

JOSEPH, Secretary to Masterman
THEODOR LOOS

GROT, Foreman of the Heart-Machine
HEINRICH GEORGE

MARY, a girl of the people ... BRIGITTE HELM

Directed by FRITZ LANG

Scenario by THEA VON HARBOU

Cameramen: CARL FREUND, GUNTHER RITTAU

"METROPOLIS"

THE STORY OF THE FILM

Adapted from the Novel by Thea von Harbou

"METROPOLIS," a great city of the future—a city of incredible contrasts, is the life-work and ambition of one man—John Masterman.

In the heart of this great city of Utopian wonders, stands the new Tower of Babel, from which John Masterman directs and controls all the powers by which the giant city is operated. The workpeople in this great "Metropolis" only interest the powerful magnate Masterman, so long as they are physically fit to operate his wonderful machines, and in order to save space and valuable land, he has built for them a subterranean city beneath the surface of "Metropolis." Here the workpeople live with their wives and children, hardly ever seeing the light of day, whilst on the surface, in palaces built for luxury and sport, thesons of the rich live a life of idleness and reckless pleasure.

Into this garden of happiness one day a strange girl of wonderful beauty appears leading a number of ragged and underfed children, and showing to them the care-free life of luxury led by the idle rich, exclaims: "Behold, these are your brothers." Eric, the son of the powerful John Masterman, has seen the girl and realises the meaning behind her words. Fascinated by her great beauty and conscience stricken with the thought of these suffering poor children, Eric determines to see for himself under what conditions his father's workpeople exist, hoping to again meet the girl in the subterranean city. Here is revealed to him the hardships and great sufferings his father's workpeople have to endure, and after witnessing an accident in one of the machine rooms, he hurries back to his father in the Tower of Babel, imploring him to grant better living conditions to the slaves in the catacombs below. The father, master-mind of "Metropolis," a man of iron will and nerve, fails to understand his son's appeal.

Eric, disappointed in his father's refusal to accede to his request, returns disguised as a workman to the machine rooms, and attends a secret meeting of his father's slaves, who are beginning to revolt against the iron will of the colussus of industry. At this meeting, Eric again sees the strange and beautiful girl—Mary by name—who persuades the turbulent sections of the people to refrain from violence, promising that some day there will be a mediator who will act on their behalf.

John Masterman, having been informed of these meetings, pays a visit to the catacombs in company with Rotwang, the great scientist and inventor, who has created the electric marvels of the city, and who is absorbed in the task of perfecting an Automaton.

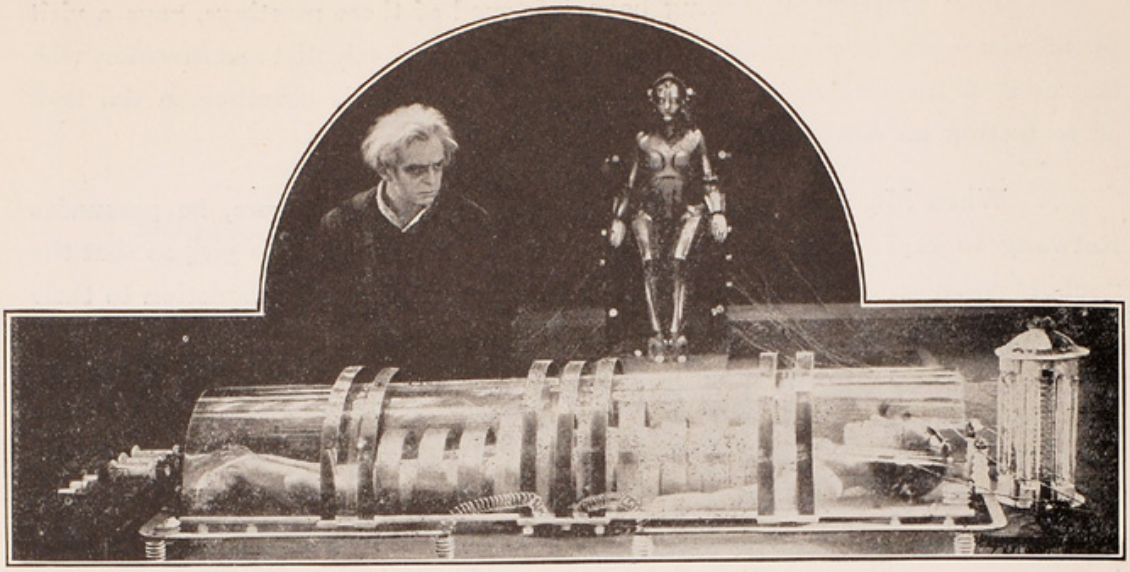
When Masterman sees Mary preaching to the workers, he persuades Rotwang to capture her and give his "robot" the face of this girl, so that the "robot" shall go among the workers and teach humility and submission to their masters, to prove to them that to live they must work.

Rotwang carries out the plan. Mary is captured and taken to his laboratory, and there by the most wonderful process of electrical transmission, her form and features are imparted to the "robot." This "robot" becomes animated. She is the exact duplicate of the real Mary, but being without a soul, is filled with all that is evil, and once among the workers, she is soon poisoning their minds against their employers and urging them to revolt.

The storm breaks loose, and the infuriated mob, led by the "Automaton Mary," destroy every machine that operates the great city, including the so-called "heart machine," on which the very life and death of the city of "Metropolis" depends. In the catastrophe that follows, young Masterman and Mary, who has escaped, united in a bond of love, save the children of the workers, who are almost drowned by the rush of water which destroys the subterranean city, as a consequence of the smashing of the machines.

In the rush and turmoil that follows, Eric and Mary are separated, and the infuriated mob, seizing the artificial "robot," attempt to burn her at the stake. Young Masterman, seeing this, and thinking it is the girl he loves, tries to save her at the risk of his own life. John Masterman is a broken man when he finds that not only is his life-work in ruins, but that he also lost his son, whom he loves more than anything on earth. When to his indescribable joy he learns that Eric and the real Mary are saved, he becomes a changed man, and thanks his Maker for the preservation of his son and Mary.

And so the prophecy of the girl came true—a mediator between brain and labour has at last been found, for young Masterman, whose heart had been so full of compassion and feeling for the hitherto suppressed and suffering poor, had by following the instincts of his own heart, brought about a peace and good-will to all men.



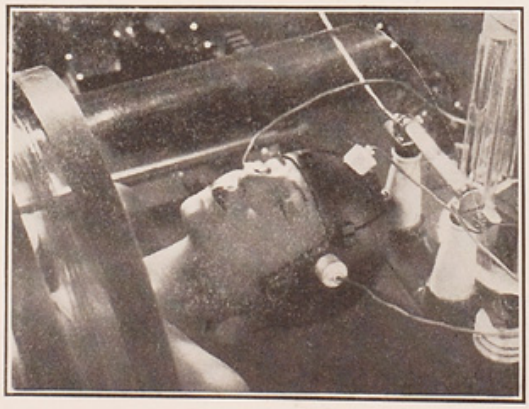
Rotwang, the Inventor, Transmits the Image of Mary to the "Robot" by means of Chemical and Electrical Apparatus.

The Creation of the Artificial Human Being.

By RUDOLF KLEIN-ROGGE

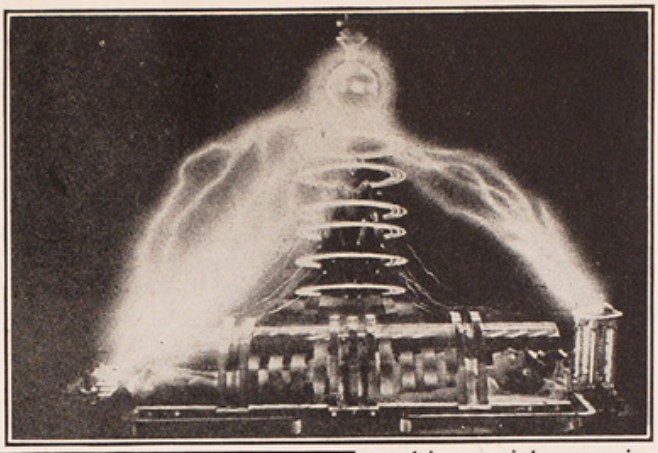
(Who Plays the part of the Inventor, Rotwang, in "Metropolis.")

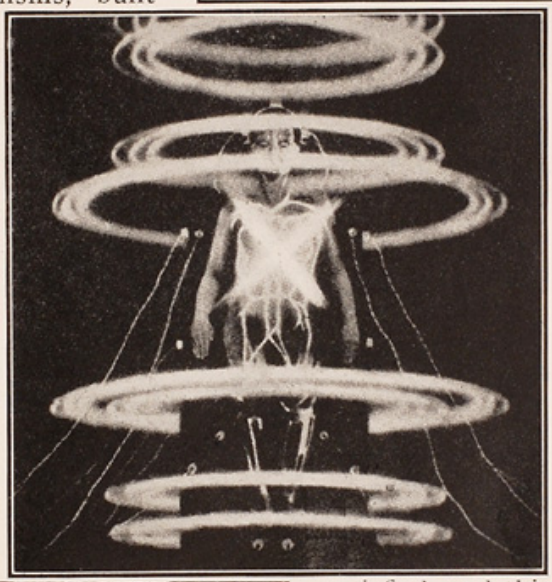
One day I found a part of the studio in Neubabelsberg completely transformed in a most peculiar manner. It was strange to me, not being a technician, and one who does not know even how to repair an electric bell. A huge, impressive and uncanny chamber representing the laboratory of the renowned inventor, Rotwang. Full of complicated and puzzling apparatus, machines, induction coils, resistances, switches, cables, fly-wheels, transmissions tables, upon which were different formulæ, boiling chemicals in bowls, tables of glass, intricate wire connections, and a number of most mysterious objects. I was overcome with a very strange feeling when I entered the room lighted with numerous mercury lamps. Enthroned on a pedestal seat was the gruesome and mystical "robot," covering the imprisoned girl, Mary, whose very heart-throbs are to be transferred to it. When completed, this "robot" will have the appearance of this innocent girl, but its actions would be evil, according to the will of its creator. Already the "robot" moves, but like an "automaton." The weird, incomprehensible smile, the slow irresistable movements, the basilisk motion of

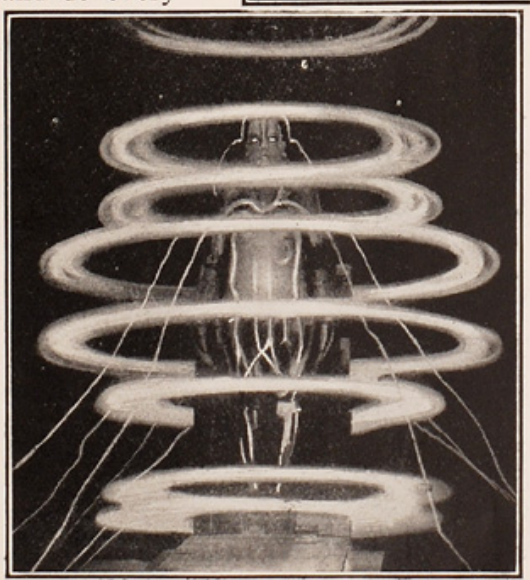


Mary on Rotwang's Experimental Table with her Face being Reproduced on that of the "Robot."

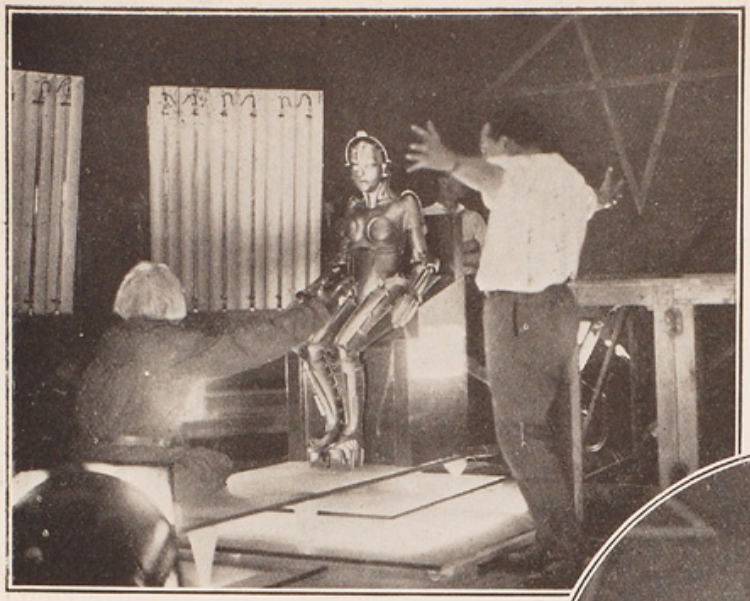
of the head, the haunting loveliness of the "automaton," born in the minds of the scenarist and director, and fashioned by the property man, holds us all spell-bound. The stage workers, the electricians, otherwise never afraid, ready for a joke, never impressed with anything, seemed to feel some uneasiness. It would be foolish to say that this wonderful laboratory, with its countless known and unknown mechanisms, built up on the possibilities of unlimited technique, is Utopian and impossible, but I myself, although strange to all these things, and not knowing why I had to switch this on, or turn that wheel, had to appear quite accustomed to it, and do everything with conviction. We all knew that this metal "automaton" encased the tender body of a beautiful girl, Brigitte Helm, and that she had to suffer severely under the strain, nevertheless, at the crucial moment, the mysterious "automaton" turns its head towards us, and we feel that the great ideal has been accomplished, but somebody must be satisfied, and this somebody, apparently with his mind far away, is watching with intense concentration, the slightest movement and every detail. He is Fritz Lang, the director, who not only believes in his work, which is a matter of course, but he believes in the power of the unreal, in the power of that which has never happened anywhere before, so that he must be convinced of the power of his fancy. Much knowledge, many experiments had to be made by the camera men, Messrs. Freund and Rittau, much care was taken also by the architect, Hunte, and the builders and painters, until Fritz Lang's imagination was brought into reality and was ready to be captured by the camera. This meant much patient waiting, and the concen-





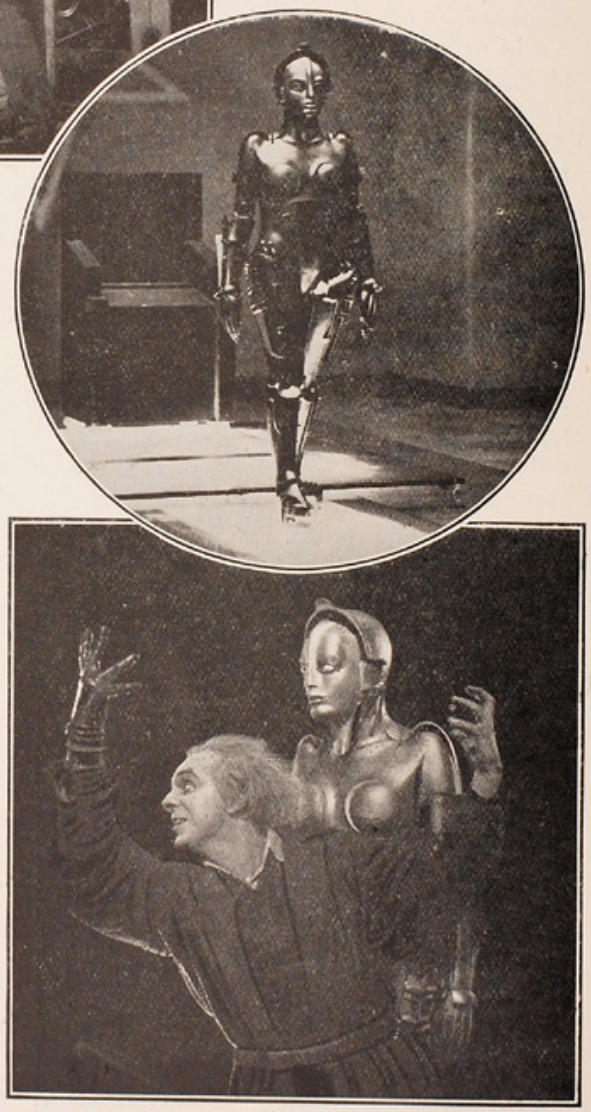


THREE INCIDENTS IN THE BIRTH OF THE ARTIFICIAL HUMAN BEING.
Top—Electrical Current Transmitting the form of Mary to the "Robot."
Middle—Rings of Electrical Fluid and Flashes Encircle the Mysterious Figure.
Bottom—The "Robot" comes to Life, showing the Heart and Main Arteries and the Steel Joints taking Human Form.



The Producer, Fritz Lang, Rehearsing the Creation of the Artificial Human Being.

tration of our energies in order to keep up our spirits. For a long time it was a great trial of endurance, but when the lamps were finally switched on, and the cameras flicked, then came our reward. Of course, there were many happy intervals, specially for one condemned to absolute helplessness as Brigitte Helm was. For days and days she was confined inside the metal "robot," very lightly clad, and unable to relax, suffering pain and discomfort. It was great fun to put coins into the opening of this metal "automaton," where they were very cleverly collected by Brigitte Helm, who fully appreciated this joke, and bought herself chocolates with the money taken from her novel collecting box. I, myself, was not over-pleased with my uncomfortable and very hard metal hand. It was a kind of iron gauntlet, and the grip of it upon my hand was rather painful, and some of my friends could tell a few painful stories about it. All these incidents are remembered after several months at work, and of course, many are almost forgotten, especially as I have have seen the finished film "METROPOLIS" for the first time, and everything appeared to me so strange. I had not the feeling that I was one of those who had played a part in it. Its magnitude gripped me so strongly, as it will the many thousands who see it on the screen for the first time.



Circle—The First Steps of the "Robot." Bottom—The "Robot" and its Inventor, Rotwang.

Many Fine "Shots" taken during the production of "Metropolis." Centre: Fritz Lang.

FRITZ LANG

(the Producer of "Metropolis")

WHAT I HAVE TO SAY

"METROPOLIS"! For more than a whole year I have been unable to get away from the town of Neubabelsburg—blessed and cursed many times from the bottom of my heart. It was either an unpleasant winter or a glorious hot summer we had to work in, but it was always a work of pleasure, and now that I have completed this great production, I seek fresh conquests, and I should like to leave the town with a song of joy, for a new experience and fresh ideas, for some other pleasant and luring destination.

What can I tell you of "METROPOLIS" other than to express my grateful thanks to those who helped me so loyally in the building of it. I once knew a young violinist who became a great artist. He was unable to sing or whistle the simplest tune, and could only express his musical thoughts through the medium of his instrument. And so it is with me. Everything I have to tell, I cannot express in words, but in depicting in black and white on the celluloid of the film; if I cannot succeed in finding expression on the picture, I certainly cannot find it in speech. It may be that the to-morrow will show what I mean. I have not yet got sufficiently far away from my work on "METROPOLIS" and am as yet too much absorbed to be able to say anything about it just now, but I hope that the moral of the film will live and bear fruit. It is certainly something to have created "METROPOLIS." It was for me and for all who worked with me a goal to be reached. Having reached that goal, we find that it is only a sign post on the road which leads to further ambition, for the wonder-world of the film is boundless, and it is a glorious task to explore this boundless wonderland.

Fritz Lang and Assistants Shown at Work!

Many of the Magnificent Scenes in "Metropolis."

Centre: Brigitte Helm.

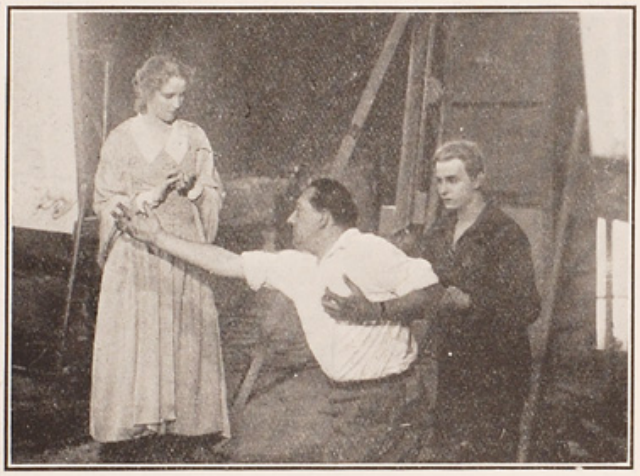
How a Love

By GUSTAV

(Who plays the part of Eric, the Son

The First Attempt at Love Making.

Frolich has a fine part, you will say, after you have seen the performance of "METROPOLIS." What could be easier than to hold the beautiful Mary in his arms and maybe kiss her? The scenes in the catacombs where Eric, the millionaire's son, is looking up at Mary, was certainly not "all beer and skittles." No, nothing of the kind! for this scene had to be done very thoroughly. It was not so easy as it looks, neither for me or for my partner, Brigitte Helm.



Our love scene took two days to make perfect.

"He is a lucky fellow," you will say. But if you had to act this scene, you would think quite differently.

Imagine having to get up at 6 a.m., dress hurriedly in half-an-hour, off by motor to the distant studio, a quick change of dress again, and I stand as a workman in the mighty catacombs, surrounded by hundreds of lamps.

The Producer Shows How it Should be Done.

A man is standing before us; he kneels, whispers and caresses an imaginary person.

Brigitte Helm and I intently follow all his movements. The surrounding world disappears for us, and we have eyes only for Fritz Lang, who is showing with expressive gesture how we are to play our parts.

"You understand?" he asks.

"Yes."

The Finished Love Scene.

Scene is Taken

FROHLICH

of the Millionaire Ruler of "Metropolis")

Examining the Details of Dress Before the Camera "Shoots."

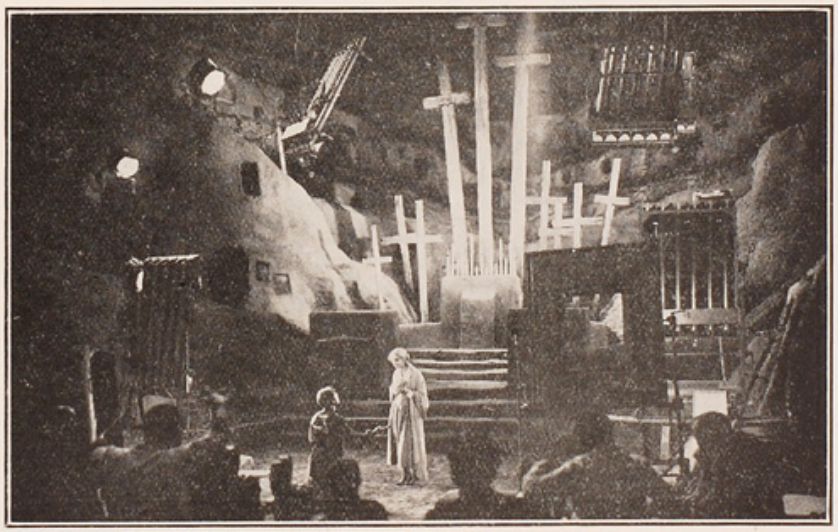
I fall on my knees, and with what I think is deep sincerity and ecstasy I am looking at the girl.

"Stop; that's no good," says Lang.

"Register more feeling"; and again I am on my knees. Gently she caresses my hair, but all my sincerest efforts are in vain. It takes hours and hours of effort and tiresome repetitions. We are already in a state of trance, so that we both firmly believe that we are really in love with each other.

Lights are switched on and finally the scene is "shot." But no good.

Again and again because the embrace was not heartfelt enough to be sufficiently convincing.



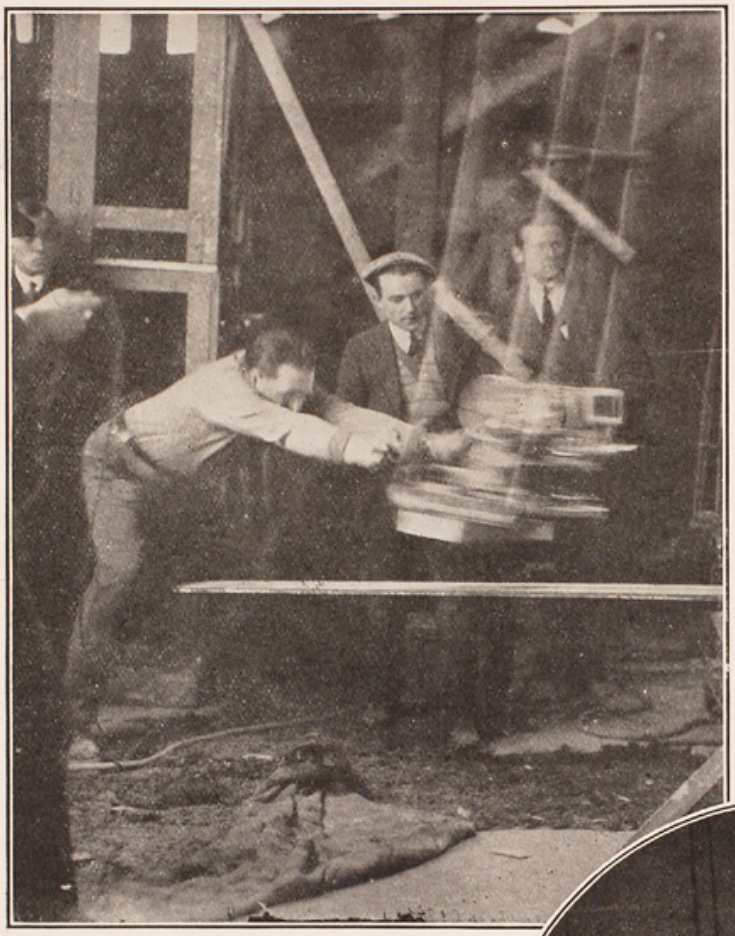
Attention, Lights — Camera "Shooting" the Love Scene.

A Little Recreation.

Then the caress was too short—down on the knees again—then something else was wrong—and so it goes on from morning to night.

The camera takes our action from a different angle. Ever more fanatic, ever more glowing, we repeat the scene. Just think; it took two days. And that is how our love scene was done.

THE FLYING CAMERA.



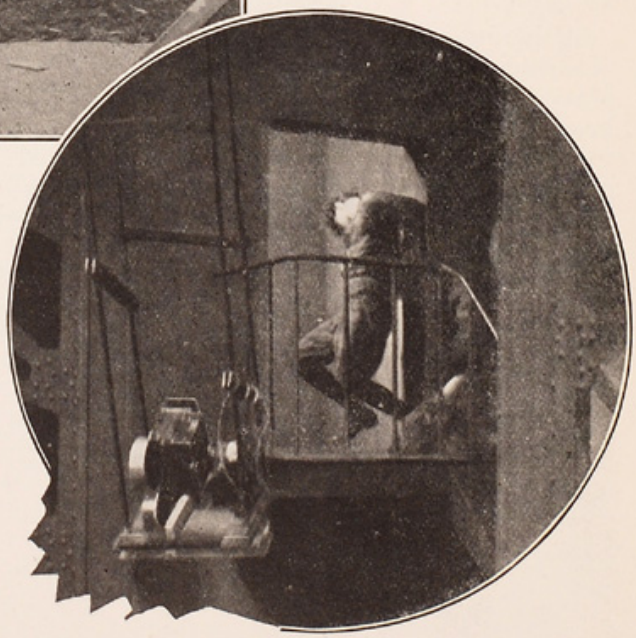
Fritz Lang Experimenting with the Flying Camera.

how one "shot" of the impression was obtained. The idea is to endeavour to make the spectator feel that he is actually there, and is taking part in the scene. He is moving about amongst the others, and at the same time his eyes are travelling from one part to another, and not merely standing by, looking on as a spectator would. If the camera were placed on his head so that it moved from place to place with him, turned when he turned his head, and altered its focus as that of the eyes altered, then such an effect might be obtained, but to carry the camera in such a manner was out of the question. So the impression was gained by the swings and turns of the "flying camera."

It was during the flood scenes in "METROPOLIS"—hundreds of children trembling with fear—one thought and will lives in them—to save themselves. Eric Masterman and Mary are endeavouring to rescue them. The only means of escape is through a small iron door and an iron staircase, which leads to the upper world.

In wild confusion they are moving towards the one narrow exit, whilst the cruel water rises higher and higher.

This is the tense situation which is shown in the picture, and to impress the fear of the children optically was a tremendous task. The two camera men, Carl Freund and Rittau, eventually solved this problem by placing the camera on a swing, and swaying it backwards and forwards towards the iron door. The distorted lights of the swaying surroundings creates in the mind of the spectator the feeling of fear. It conveys to one the impression that the world will collapse in the next instant. This is



The Flying Camera at Work.

THE CHILDREN OF "METROPOLIS."

By Thea von Harbou.

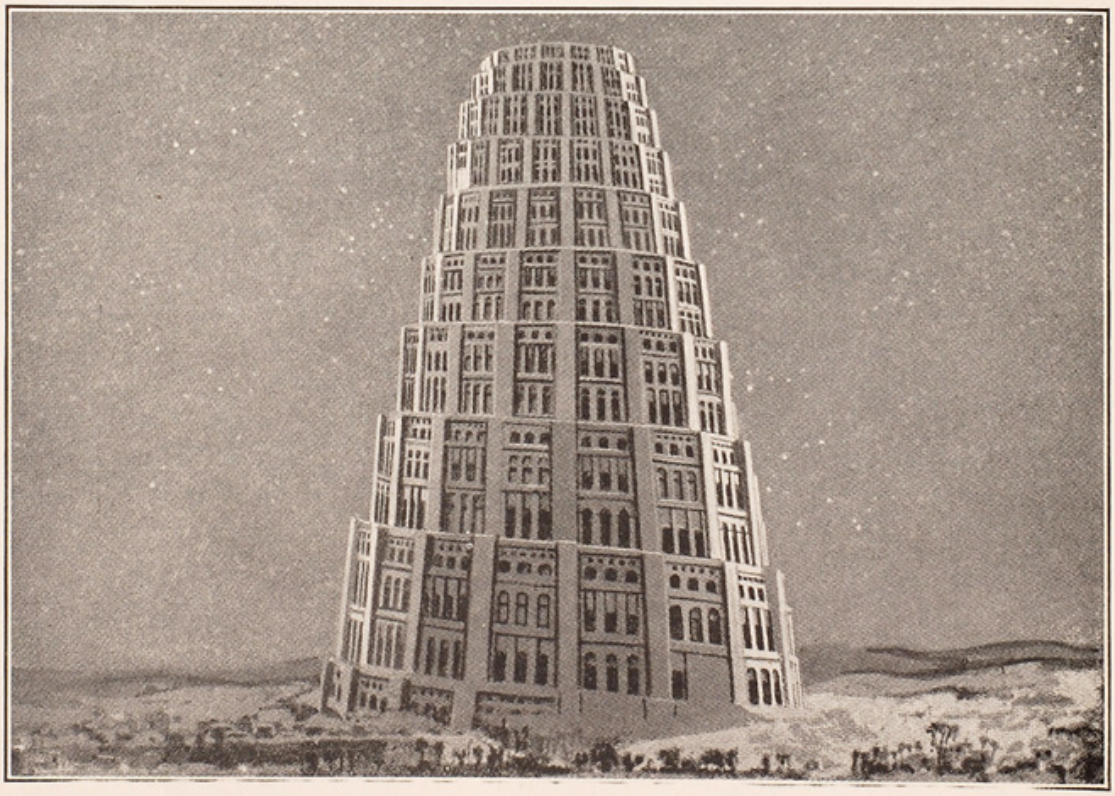
Very many remarkable things happened during the making of "METROPOLIS," but the most unforgettable was the forlorn crowds of poorly clad children in this gigantic and impressive subterranean city of the labourers. They came from the poorest quarters of Berlin to Babelsberg, accompanied by their sisters and relatives to take part in the picture, some of them for weeks and weeks on end, and others occasionally when we were able to employ them. My heart went out to them, for on those days when there was nothing or very little to do, Babelsberg was a paradise to them, because they found the taking of a picture quite a treat, and the very thing they had dreamed about. The warm clean rooms in which they changed their clothes, the games in the beautiful sand, and all sorts of toys for their pleasure. Most important of all, there was always plenty to eat for them—all the hungry little mouths. Four times a day there was a hot meal for them, with hot cocoa and cake at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. It was no wonder, therefore, that in the evening there was always more children than in the morning, for a bunch of them who were not engaged, simply climbed over the fence and smuggled themselves in between the others in order to get something good to eat. To be quite honest, I was afraid of the taking of the children's scenes. The flood catastrophe alone, in the city of the labourers, was accompanied by enormous technical difficulties. With hundreds of little children who had no idea of what it means to take a picture—and some unforeseen circumstance with one of them, would have been sufficient to destroy the whole painful work or weeks and weeks, but we were very pleasantly disappointed. No film ever had more enthusiastic and willing collaborators than these little children. They were always willing to dash into the rather chilly water. They ruled the situation. They portrayed fear and desperation like perfect actors. Only now and again some of them had to be reminded if they should so far forget as to look mischievously at the camera.

Thanks are due to the dear little ones for their splendid help in making "METROPOLIS," and I thank them from the bottom of my heart for what they have done.

Some of the Scenes taken during th

e Flood Catastrophe in "Metropolis."

Fritz Lang says: "Let us Build a Tower which shall Reach Unto the Stars."



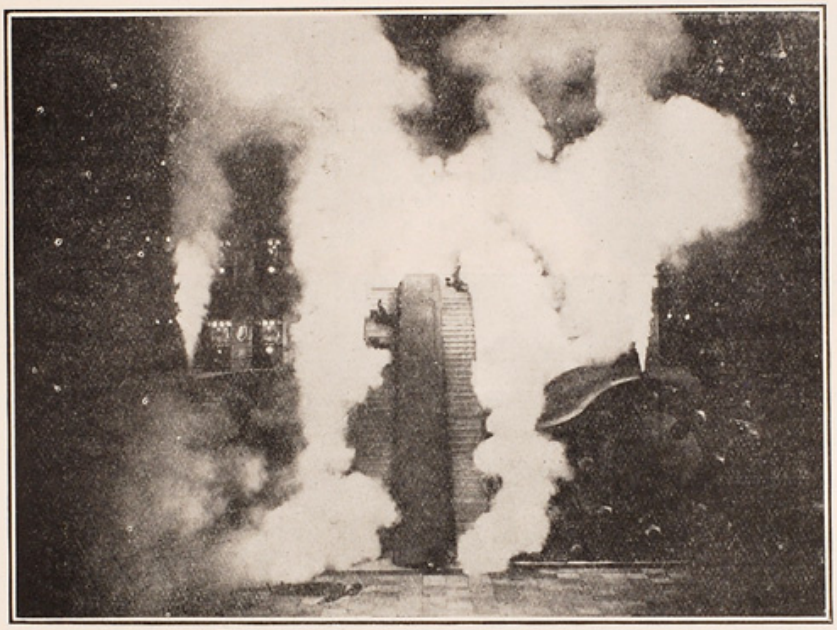
And as the Sun went down for the 14th time, the Builders completed their work, and the new Tower of Babel Stretched up to the Skies.

HOW IT WAS DONE

By CARL FREUND

(the Cameraman of "METROPOLIS")

Well, we simply turned and turned the handle of the camera, and the time passed very quickly. The two years of work on "METROPOLIS" was very interesting. We worked in the studio in the burning heat and the icy cold weather. For weeks and weeks we lived on the water during the time of the taking of the flood scenes. For many days, we did not close our eyes, as many of the scenes had to be taken at night, but as it is all in a day's work, we took it as a matter of course.

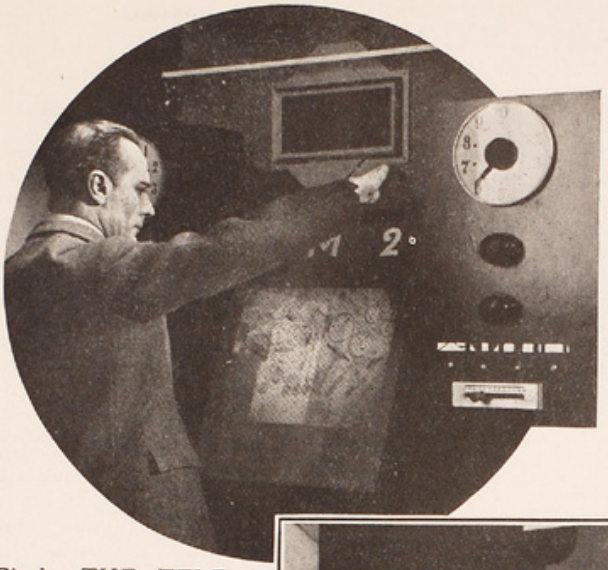


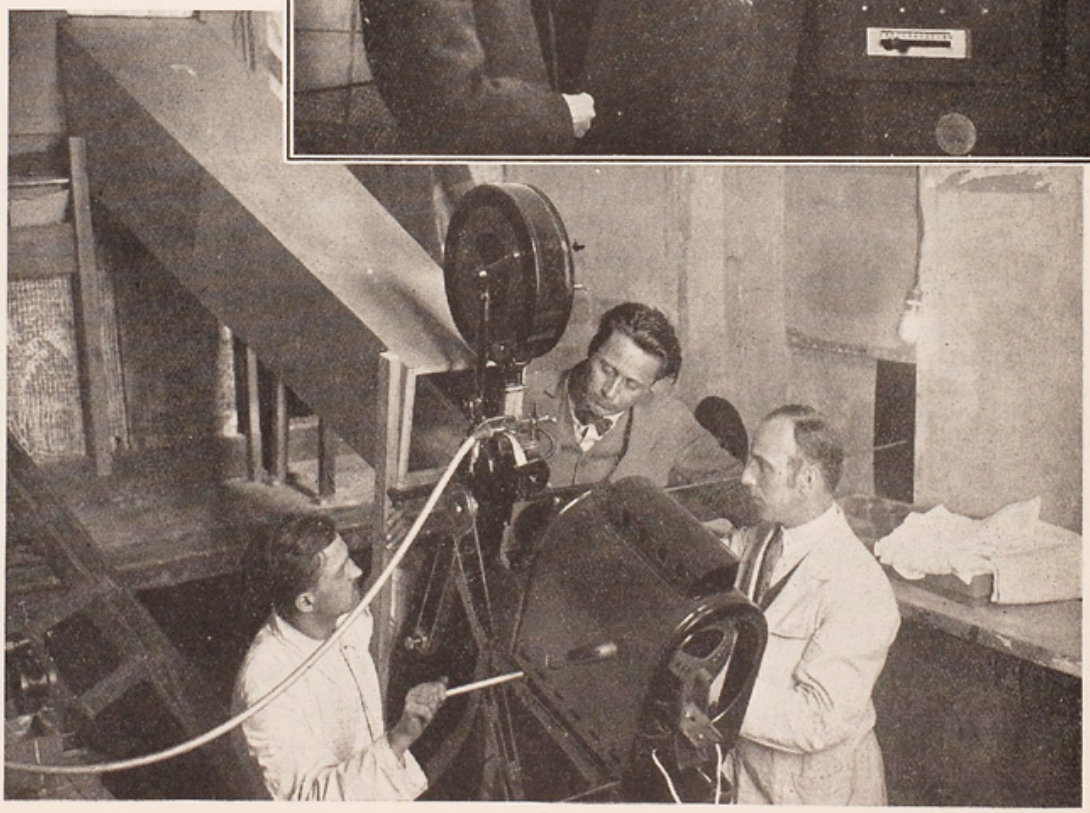
The Destruction of the Machines.

And so if anyone asks: "Tell me, Mr. Freund, how did you do that?" — and is there anyone who does not ask the cameraman such questions? — then I realised the technical difficulties that Fritz Lang, the producer, and my fellow cameraman, Rittau, had to face. How was it done? Before explaining some of the intricate camera work in "METROPOLIS," I want to emphasise, that what seems to be a trick is not always so in fact. On the contrary, a good trick may not be realised by the public as such. For instance, the scenes showing the destruction of the big machines in "METROPOLIS" were actually explosions, and we also had to make a real fire under the "automaton" witch, Mary, not to mention the hundreds of scenes which were taken of course without using any fakes at all, but as may be expected in "METROPOLIS," the city of the future, are shown some of the technical inventions

The End of the Evil "Automaton."

which have only been hinted at. For example, the television-phone. It was not so easy to get at once the effect of the Master of "METROPOLIS" (Alfred Abel) being able to see and hold an exciting conversation with his foreman in the machine room. So, first of all, we took a picture of the foreman, then we projected this picture through an ordinary projector on to a screen of ground glass on the televisor. The effect was amazing; the problem of television effect was solved in the most remarkable way. Of course, we cannot recommend this method to inventors for their own purposes, as some technical difficulties might arise in such a procedure. Another difficult problem was the technical solution of a drive through the city of the future. We built the inside of a motor-car in the studio, and behind





Circle—THE TELEVISION 'PHONE.

Middle—Switching on the Photograph of the Person to whom one is speaking.

Bottom—Behind the Scenes of the Television 'Phone, showing how it was done.

The Interesting Art of Make-Up.

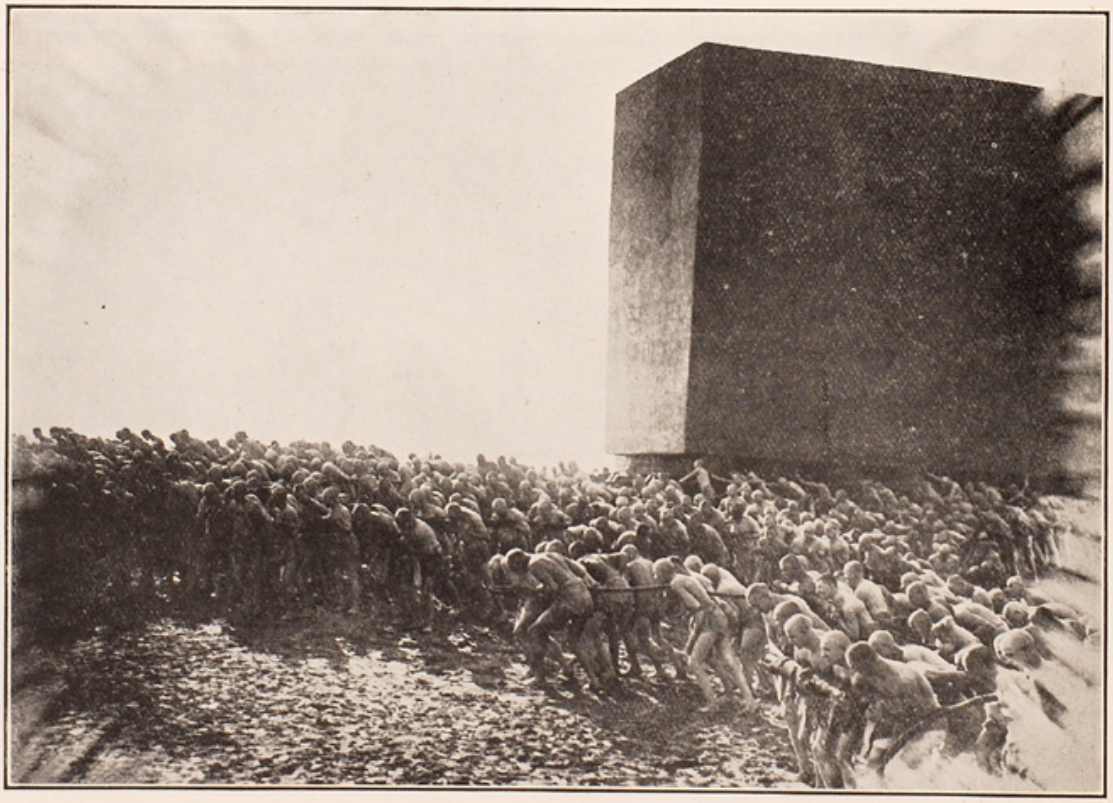
The Completed Work.

it we painted a view of a sky-scraper, futuristic motor-cars, etc., which in revolving panorama form gave us the effect we desired.

The building of the Tower of Babel also gave us all many a headache. Actually no technical fake was intended to be employed here, but we required 6,000 baldheaded men. This in itself, seemed a hopeless task for the assistant producers, but at last we got 1,000 unemployed men who were prepared to have their heads shaved. A few dozen barbers were called into service, and immediately set to work on the 1,000 heads. This was all very fine and large, but we only had 1,000 and we wanted 6,000. But the difficulty was solved. We photographed the 1,000 men six times, and by joining these six parts together, we got our 6,000 men. Another difficult object was to get the right camera angles. For the flood scenes we had to build a raft, on which everyone concerned, with spotlight cameras, etc., were placed.

But for me, especially, being somewhat rotund, it was not very easy to "shoot" from some almost impossible situations in which the camera was placed. Anyhow, all difficulties were surmounted, and that was "how it was done."

The Floating Camera Pontoons from which the Flood Scenes were taken.

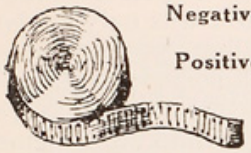


Preparations for the Building of the Tower of Babel, in which 6,000 Bald-headed Men were employed.

FIGURES THAT SPEAK

Compiled by the Assistant Producer——Rudi George.

The taking of "METROPOLIS" occupied 310 working days, and sixty working nights—from the 22nd of May, 1925, until the 30th of October, 1926. The following materials were used during the production:—



feet.

Negative Film—1,960,000

Positive Film—3,900,000

ARTISTS:—

Leading Parts ... 8

Smaller Parts ... 750

Crowds, Male ... 25,000

Crowds, Female... 11,000

Bald-heads 1,000

Children 750

Negroes.. 100

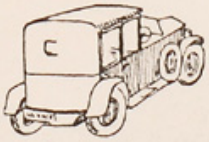
Chinese... 25

Wages for Labourers... £80,000

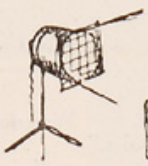
Cost of Costumes ... £10,000

Shoes ... ... 3,500 pairs

Wigs... 50



Motor-Cars of Special Construction 50



Light.

Paint.

Wood.

Plaster. Mortar.

£20,000.

What the Actors have to Say!

Brigitte Helm as the Vamp "Robot" in the Wonderful Cabaret Scenes in "Metropolis."

BRIGITTE HELM

HOW I WAS DISCOVERED

It seemed to me as if I were dreaming. I was always very much attracted by the stage, and even as a child, I often used to play the leading part in our school performances. At that time I was only twelve years old, but people found that I had some talent, and advised me to go on the stage. I was always thinking of fame, art, and the many other things that girls of that age do think of. Anxiously, I looked forward to the moment when I should stand in the limelight, but this moment never came, and time was passing. My mother saw my despair and decided to help me by writing a letter to Fritz Lang. To my great delight, I received an invitation to go and see him in Babelsberg. You cannot imagine how excited I was. I stood in the huge studio, amidst the lights, and many strange folk, trembling like a leaf; everything was so new, so unusual, so fantastic to me. Someone gave me a letter to read, and while doing this, the lights were switched on, and the cameraman turned the handle. The great moment had come. I was being filmed! Then an actor approached me unexpectedly, and in a loud thrilling voice insulted me. Afterwards I heard that this incident was necessary, as Mr. Lang wanted to test my expression. The test turned out satisfactory, and I was soon under contract to play the double role in "METROPOLIS."

ALFRED ABEL

The Master of "Metropolis"

MY EXPERIENCES IN YOSHIWARA.

Yoshiwara! Beautiful women in pretty frocks! Gentlemen in evening dress.

Night scenes! A gentle shiver passes through the bodies and the painted faces of the ladies, with their ostrich feather fans, and

light evening shawls serving as a protection against the bitter cold. Yes, it is cold; very cold indeed!

Ready! Lights! Camera!

"More gaiety! More life, ladies and gentlemen!"

Mr. Lang's voice sounds through the night.

Here we all are in Yoshiwara, the biggest pleasure garden ever conceived. Well, when you are shivering with the cold how can you be gay? Two of the beautiful ladies approach the all-powerful producer, saying: "It is so cold; please give us something to warm us."

"All right; Charles, bring a bottle of cognac." One bottle of cognac for a freezing crowd of a hundred! A flash through the brain. "Charles; not one bottle; ten bottles, but be quick."

There was a cheer. There was gaiety and real amusement, and no more need for vocal encouragement.

———:o:———

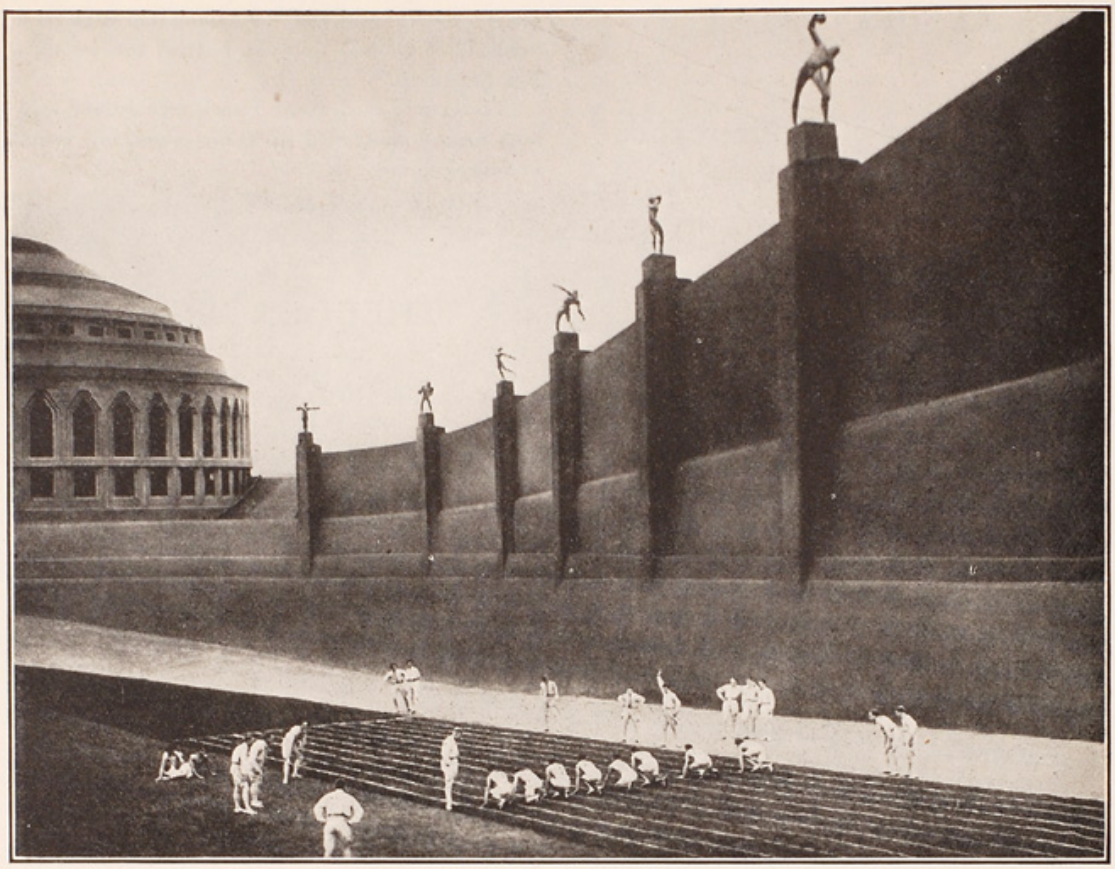
THEODOR LOOS

The Secretary of the Master of "Metropolis"

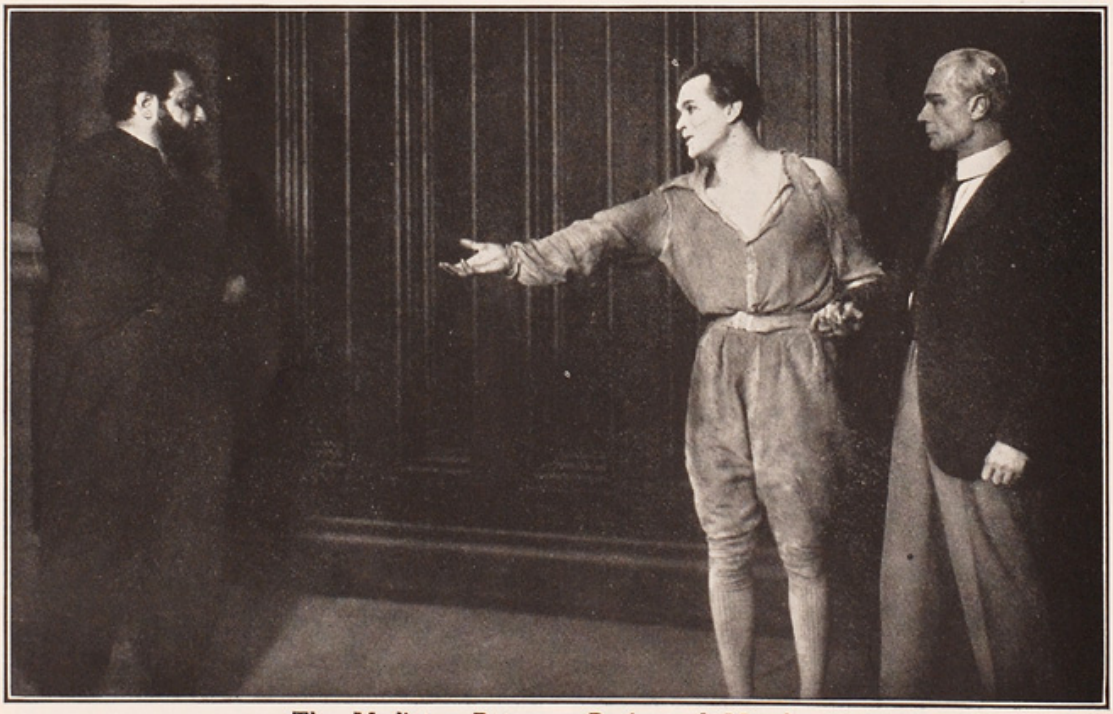
I GET MY FEET WET.

I had some of the pleasantest bathing in my whole life in the studio plant of Neubabelsburg, where a large tank was built for the flood scenes in "METROPOLIS." The water was especially kept at a very low temperature for us actors, in order that we should not become too exhuberant.

We had to dash into this water from morning to night with about 500 children. Sometimes we got some grog, chocolate cakes and sometimes an icy douch. Mr. Lang and and his staff with cameras, etc., were established on a float, and moved amongst us, urging us to seek out the biggest and most powerful jets of water; but in spite of all the inconvenience we were put to, I would not have missed those thrilling days for anything in the world. Even when I got my feet wet, I felt that it was worth it.



The Stadium of the Sons of the Rich.



The Mediator Between Brain and Muscle.

THEA VON HARBOU

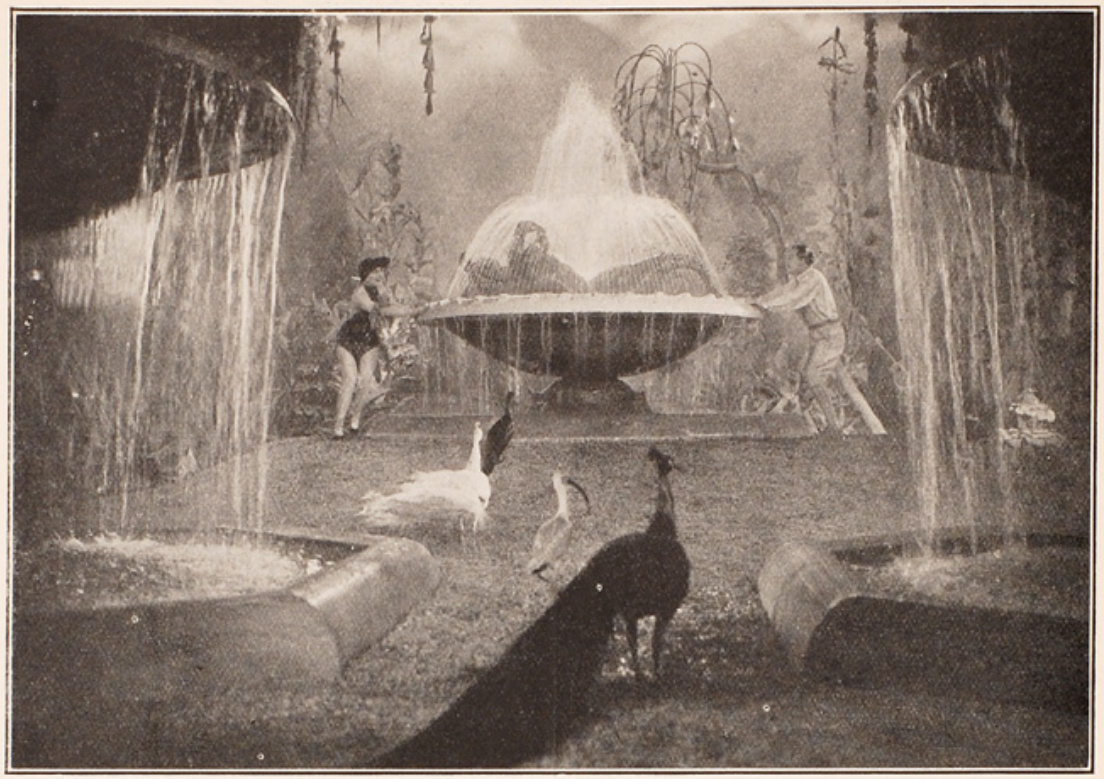
Authoress of the Novel and Scenario of "Metropolis."

Thea von Harbou is descended from a very old family, many of whom have been prominent members of society. In her earliest youth she was attracted to art and literature, and many short stories, novels and plays came from her versatile pen. When the film came to the fore, she was drawn by literary instinct to this field of magic power, and she had a very sure insight into what was needed for the films, for her very first scenarios attracted expert attention, and that attraction still remains. There is no scenario of hers that has not been filmed, and most of these are from her own novels. Her imagination and knowledge of what is required for the making of good pictures is remarkable.

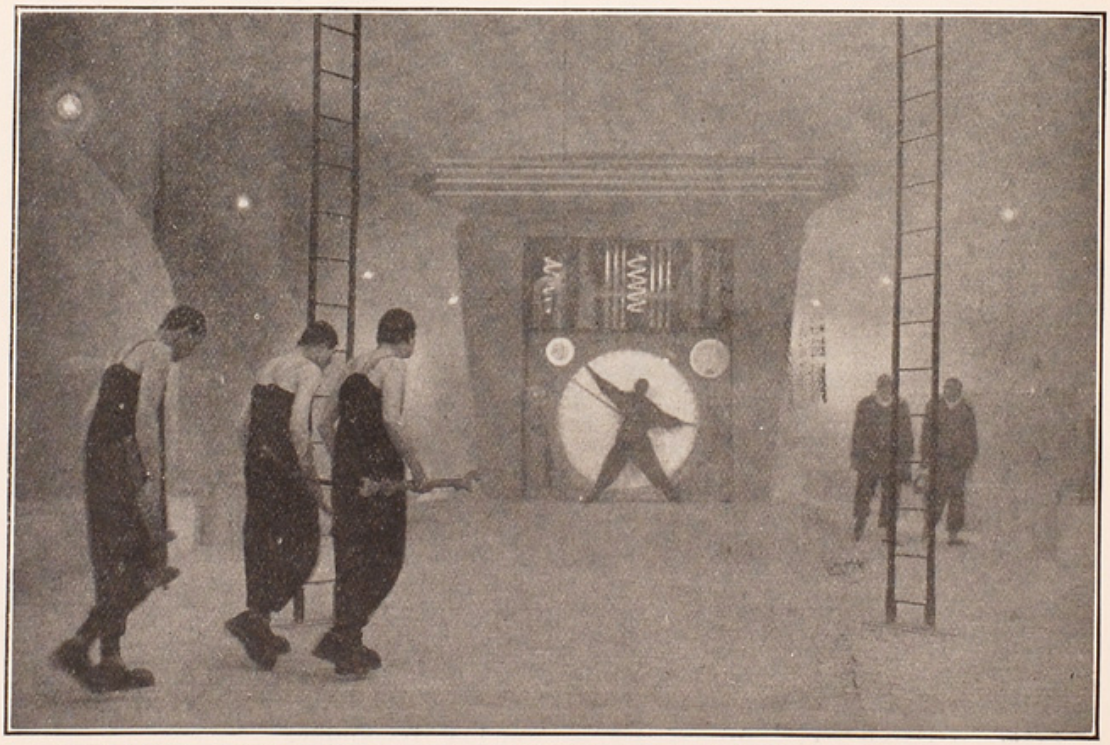
One has only to look back on some of the work she has already accomplished to recognise some of her wonderful powers of creative imagination. "THE INDIAN TOMB," a novel from which she constructed a scenario, at once fantastic and impressive. Everyone will remember the famous picture "DESTINY." This scenario was also her work, and the first German masterpiece to be produced by her husband, Fritz Lang, whom she married during the time that the film was made. The whole world was impressed by the film interpretation of Norbert Jacques' famous novel, "Dr. MABUSE." This scenario was also the achievement by the pen of Thea von Harbou. Then came "THE NIBELUNGS" (Siegfried and Krimhild's Revenge"). First she brought out the old saga in the form of a novel which suited the modern strenuous reader better than the old style of the original. This was a very worthy effort, the consequence of which was the creation of the two well known films. Then came the idea to create something gigantic and overwhelming in its possibilities; something that would give a glimpse of the mysterious future, and which would at the same time appeal to all nations. The outcome of this idea was "METROPOLIS." First the novel, then the scenario, and now the film—which will astonish the whole world with its revelations of manifest wonders.

Thea von Harbou is an unbiassed authority in the realm of pictures. Her ideas and words are the most precious foundations of each film, and they take unto themselves visible shapes through the genius of her husband, Fritz Lang, acknowledged by the world to be the master-mind of cinema technique.

CONTRASTS.



ETERNAL SUNSHINE—In the Garden of the "Sons of the Rich."



ETERNAL DARKNESS—In the Subterranean Machine-Town of the Labourers.

Death to the Machines !

These Pages Show How Thea von Harbou Constructed the Scenario of "METROPOLIS" from the Lines of her Novel.

THE NOVEL

Metropolis had a brain.

Metropolis had a heart.

The heart of the machine city of Metropolis dwelt in a white, cathedral-like building. The heart of the machine city of Metropolis was guarded by one single man.

The man's name was Grot, and he loved his machine.

The machine was a universe to itself. Above the deep mysteries of its delicate joints, like the sun's disc, like the halo of a divine being, stood the silver spinning wheel, the spokes of which appeared, in the whirl of revolution, as a single gleaming disc. This disc filled out the back wall of the building, with its entire breadth and height.

No machine in all Metropolis which did not receive its power from this heart.

One single lever controlled this marvel of steel. All the treasures of the world heaped up before him would not, for Grot, have outweighed this, his machine.

When, at the grey hour of dawn, Grot heard the voice of the great Metropolis roaring, he glanced at the clock on the brow of the wall where was the door, and thought: "That's against all nature and regularity. . ."

When, at the red hour of sunrise, Grot saw the stream of the multitude rolling along, twelve files deep, led by a girl—dancing to the rhythm of the yelling mob, Grot set the lever of the machine to "Safety," carefully closed the door of the building and waited.

The mob thundered against his door.

"Oh—knock away!" thought Grot. "That door can stand a good bit. . . ."

He looked at the machine. The wheel was spinning slowly. The beautiful spokes were playing, plainly to be seen. Grot nodded to his beautiful machine.

"They will not trouble us long," thought he. He waited for a signal from the New Tower of Babel. For a word from John Fredersen. The word did not come.

"He knows," thought Grot, "that he can rely on me. . . ."

The door quaked like a giant drum. The mob hurled itself, a living battering ram, against it.

"There are rather a lot of them, it seems to me," thought Grot. He looked at the door, it trembled, but it held. And it looked as though it would still hold for a long time

THE SCENARIO

Scene 263.—The "Heart-Machine."

Long Shot—Nearly the whole picture is filled by the gigantic steel structure of the heart-machine—a mass of switchboards, levers and safety valves. The machine works with a regular movement in all its joints. The wheel is like the disc of the sun behind it. Grot, the foreman, confident and calm is carefully watching his machine and chewing tobacco.

Detail Shot:

Grot, busy on the machine, looks up startled. Close-up: Signal-box in the wall, covered with glass, on the pane of glass is continually repeated the word "DANGER."

Selection:

Grot jumps energetically to the big lever and pulls it over with all his strength.

Scene 263/1:

From another angle—heart-machine in the background; two sliding doors; one ascending and the other descending close the room across its whole breadth.

Detail:

Grot runs to a kind of telephone, and speaks into the mounthpiece.

Scene 264—John Fredersen's Room:

The room is empty. On the table constant light signals are calling. On a tape machine corresponding to that of Grot, the ribbon is endlessly running.

Scene 265—Heart-Machine:

Detail—Grot on the telephone as 263/1. He speaks; he shouts; he yells into the apparatus. No answer.

The Novel—continued

Grot nodded to himself in deep contentment. He would have loved to light his pipe, if only smoking had not been forbidden here. He heard the yelling of the mob, and rebound upon rebound against the singing door with a feeling of smug fierceness. He loved the door. It was his ally. He turned around and looked at his machine. He nodded at it affectionately: "We two—eh? . . . . What do you say to that boozy lot of fatheads, machine?"

The storm before the door wound itself up into a typhoon. It was the hackling fury born of long resistance.

"Open the door! !" hackled the fury. "Open the door, you damned scoundrel! !"

"Wouldn't that just suit you!" thought Grot. How well the door was holding! His gallant door!

What were those drunken apes out there singing about?

"We've passed sentence upon the machines!

We have condemned the machines to death!"

Ho ho ho—! He could sing, too—could Grot! He could sing drunken songs, just fine! He kicked with both heels against the pedestal of the machine, upon which he was sitting. He pushed the black cap down lower in his neck. With his red fists resting upon his knees, opening wide his mouth, he sang with his whole throat, while his little, wild eyes were fixed on the door:

"Come on, you boozy lot, if you dare!
Come if you want a good hiding, you lousy apes!
Your mothers forgot
To pull your pants tight
When you were li'tle, you guttersnipes!
You're not even fit for pigs' swill!
You fell from the rubbish cart,
When it took the big curve!
And now you stand before the door,
Before my gallant door, and bawl:
Open the door! Open the door!
Let the devil open it for you."

The pedestal of the machine boomed under the drumming rhythm of his boot-heels. . . .

But suddenly they both stopped drumming and singing. An exceedingly powerful, exceedingly white light flared up three times, under the dome of the building. A sound-signal, as gentle and as penetrating as the gong-beat of a temple bell, became audible, overpowering every sound.

"Yes!" said Grot, the guard of the Heart-machine.

He sprang to his feet. He raised his broad face, which shone with the joyful eagerness of obedience. "Yes, here I am!"

The Scenario—continued

At last, perspiring freely, furious and roaring like a bull, he throws down the telephone, runs his fingers through his hair and shakes his head.

Scene 266—No. 1—Machine Room:

To the machines—to the machines. The "robot" Maria and a horde of men and women rush into the machine room yelling:—

Title:

"Away from the machines! Let them run themselves to death!" The mechanics are dragged away from the machines and drawn into the crowd, still yelling:—

Title:

"To the heart machine! To the heart machine!"
The crowd exits like a whirlpool. The machines left alone still working.

Scene 267—John Fredersen's Room Long Shot:

John Fredersen enters and looks round. The tape machine with a heap of tape—John Fredersen takes the centre of the picture, picks up the tape and reads it, then goes to the telephone and takes up the receiver.

Scene 268—Heart Machine: Shot of Telephone:

Grot looks up. A characteristic sign is repeated on the apparatus. Grot roaring into the telephone, takes up the receiver and listens.

The Novel—continued

A voice said, slowly and clearly:

"Open the door, and give up the machine."

Grot stood motionless. Fists like hammers hung down from his arms. He gulped. But he said nothing.

"Repeat instructions," said the quiet voice.

The guard of the heart machine swung his head violently this way and that, like a weighty bundle.

"I . . . . I didn't understand," he said, gaspingly.

The quiet voice spoke in a more forceful tone:

"Open the door and give up the machine!"

The man still said nothing, gazing stupidly upward.

"Repeat instructions," said the quiet voice.

The guard of the Heart-machine drew in a great draught of air.

"Who is speaking there?" he asked. "What lousy swine is speaking these—?"

"Open the door, Grot . . ."

"The devil I will—!"

. . . . and give up the machine!"

"The machine—?" said Grot, "the—my machine?"

"Yes," said the quiet voice.

The guard of the Heart-machine began to shake. His was a quite blue face, in which the eyes stood like whitish balls. The mob, which was throwing itself, as a buffer, against the ringing door, yelled, hoarse with yelling:

"The machines must die—to Hell with them. Death! Death! Death to the machines!"

"Who is speaking there" asked the man, so loudly that his words were a scream.

"John Fredersen is speaking."

"I want the pass-word."

"The pass-word is one thousand and three. The machine is running on half power. You have set the lever to 'Safety . . .'"

The guard of the Heart-machine stood like a log. Then the log turned itself clumsily around, staggered to the door, and tore at the bolts.

The mob heard it. It yelled triumph. The door flew open. The mob swept aside the man who was standing on its threshold. The mob hurled itself towards the machine. The mob made to lay hands upon the machine. A dancing girl was leading the mob on.

"Look—!" she shouted. "Look—! The beating heart of Metropolis! What shall be done to the heart of Metropolis—?"

"We've passed sentence upon the machines! We have condemned the machines to death! The machines must die—to hell with them!"

But the mob did not catch up the girl's song. The mob stared over, at the machine—at the beating heart of the great machine city,

The Scenario—continued

Scene 269—John Fredersen's Room:

Detail—John Fredersen on the telephone gives an order emphatically, with a strong facial expression.

Title:

"Open the doors!"

Scene 270—Heart Machine:

Detail—Grot, on the telephone, thinks he cannot have heard the order correctly. Shouts something into the transmitter, and points with his thumb over his shoulder to the doors.

Different Camera Angle:

"Close-up" of the doors. In front of them thunders and shouts the crowd.

Scene 271—John Fredersen's Room:

John Frederson on the telephone. He gives with more emphasis his unmistakeable order: "Open the doors."

Scene 272—Heart Machine:

"Close-up." Grot on the telephone. It seems as if his eyes are going to drop out of his head, as with the greatest excitement he shouts into the telephone: "If the heart-machine is destroyed there will not be one stone in the subterranean town left upon another!"

Scene 273—John Fredersen's Room:

John Fredersen on the telephone; he stamps his foot. "Do what I say!"

Scene 274—Heart Machine:

With a terrible cry, Grot throws down the telephone, and pushes the door lever over with his foot.

Different Camera Angle:

The mass in front of the doors, led by the "robot" Maria, suddenly pointing: "Look! Look!"

Detail:

The doors slowly open.

Detail:

Grot, half mad, rages like a lion in its cage, shouting: "Dogs! Dogs!"

Different Angle:

The doors already show a small

The Novel—continued

which was called Metropolis, and which they had fed. They pressed up slowly, as a single body, before the machine, which gleamed like silver. In the face of the mob stood hatred. In the face of the mob stood superstitious fear. Desire for the last destruction stood in the face of the mob.

But before it could take expression Grot, the guard, threw himself before his machine. There was no filthy word which he did not raise to chuck into the face of the mob. The dirtiest term of revilement was not dirty enough for him to apply to the mob. The mob turned red eyes upon him. The mob glared at him. The mob saw: The man there, in front of them, was abusing them in the name of the machine. For them, the man and the machine melted into one. Man and machine deserved the same hatred. They pushed forward against man and machine. They seized the man and meant the machine. They roared him down. They stamped him underfoot. They dragged him hither and thither and out of the door. They forgot the machine, for they had the man—had the guard of the heart-beat of all the machines—thinking that, in tearing the man away from the Heart-machine, they were tearing the heart from the breast of the great machine city.

What should be done to the heart of Metropolis

It should be trodden underfoot by the mob.

"Death!" yelled the victorious mob. "Death to the machines!" yelled the victorious mob.

The Scenario—continued

opening. Some of the crowd are swinging themselves on the doors.

Detail:

Grot turns round as if shot.

Scene 275:

Taken from inside towards the doors. One of the doors disappearing upwards and the other downwards. Hands are clawing; faces appearing; some bodies are swinging over the sinking door.

Camera turns to Grot:

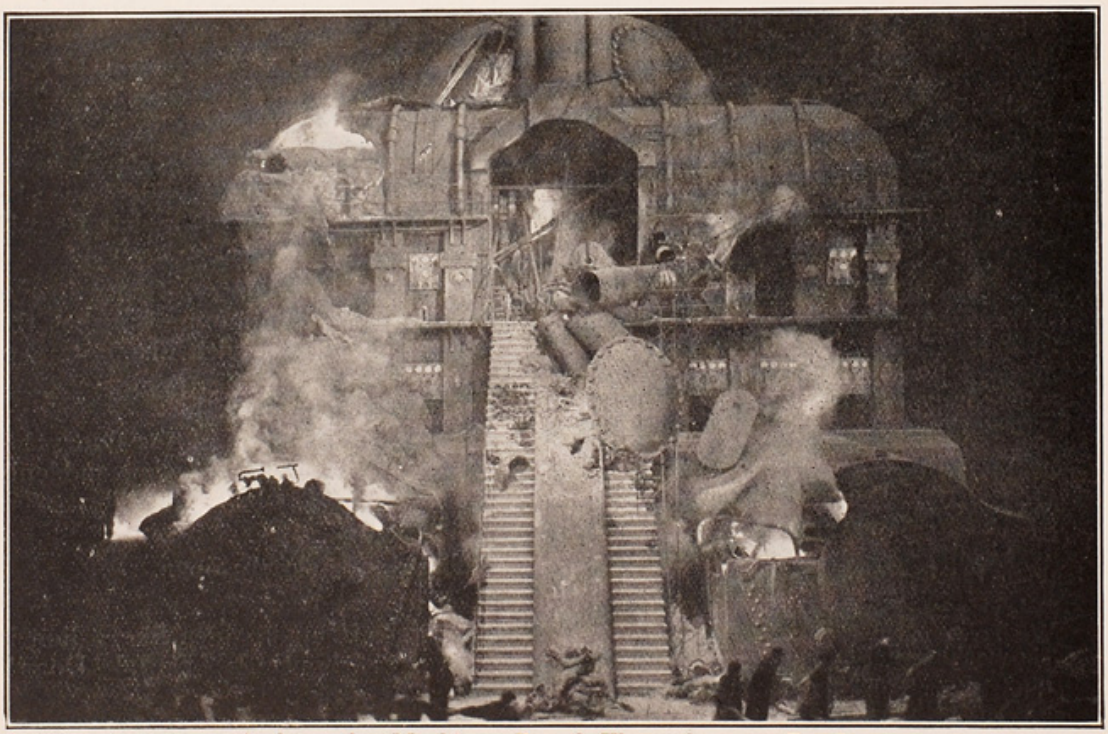
Grot, helpless with rage, unable to control himself, takes up a crowbar, and stands roaring with his body bent forward, deadly dangerous.

Camera further back:

Crowd climbing over the doors, on the other side, shouting with anger.

Detail:

Grot takes a few steps towards the machine. The crowd streams in, led by the "robot" Maria towards the heart-machine, shouting "Death to the machines!"



And so the Machines Raced Themselves to Death.